

CORRECTIONS STANDARDS AUTHORITY
600 BERCUT DRIVE
SACRAMENTO, CA 95811
916-445-5073
WWW.CDCR.CA.GOV/DIVISION_SBOARDS/CSA



August 9, 2011

Don. L. Meyer
Chief Probation Officer
Sacramento County Probation Department
9750 Business Park Drive, Suite #220
Sacramento, CA 95827

Dear Chief Meyer:

SUITABILITY PLAN VISIT - SACRAMENTO COUNTY YOUTH DETENTION FACILITY:
WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE §209(e)

On August 8, 2011 Corrections Standards Authority (CSA) staff conducted a site visit of Sacramento County's Youth Detention Facility (YDF), pursuant to Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code §209(e). The purpose of the visit was to confirm the department's adherence to the April 27, 2007 Suitability Plan (SP), which was required when the facility experienced chronically crowded conditions. This letter relates CSA's assessment of the totality of conditions of the facility during our visit.

Each unit was below rated capacity (RC) on the date of our visit. The thirteen occupied units have a combined RC of 352 and the population on August 8th was 195. This is consistent with the accounting of daily population we receive from the department each month. The last day of crowding experienced by any of the units was April 11, 2007.

We began our visit by meeting with Probation Division Chief Chris Johnson and Assistant Probation Division Chief Michael Shores who updated us on the most recent budget cuts and new strategies designed to make more effective use of existing staffing and living and program space. They explained the operational capacity limits of the units which keep the population of the maximum security units below 16 and the remaining units under 20. They shared the function of the High Impact Unit (currently Housing Unit [HU] 4) and plans for introducing more evidence based, cognitive training programs, one designed to address gang involvement. The goal of the High Impact Unit is to respond to significant behavioral issues through re-education rather than room confinement. An orientation unit is also planned in order to present a more comprehensive and consistent introduction to YDF for new intakes. We reviewed facility-wide data which shows that use of force continues to decline.

Supervising Deputy Probation Officer Kevin Gregory escorted us through the facility where we visited each living unit and spoke to youth and custody staff. Staff remarked that the tone of the facility is calmer since crowding ended and it is easier to manage the smaller population. During our afternoon tour youth were engaged in a variety of recreational activities in their unit courtyards or dayrooms. The youth we spoke to appreciated the numerous recreational and program opportunities available. Staff explained the Program Request Sheet that has been adopted. The form allows youth to self-refer to activities including: Athletic Training, Book Club, BASICS, Criminal Lifestyles, Hands on Banking, Aggression Replacement Training, LEAP, College Information and Prep, Planned Parenthood, Job Skills, Dance, Yoga and Conflict Resolution. HU-7 and HU-9 are used for programming. HU-9 is set up as an "Incentive" unit for youth on honor status who attend extra curricular programs there. HU-7 continues to be utilized for Skills, Training and Enrichment Program (STEP). Mr. Gregory told us that the latter pull out program benefits youth who require the extra services.

The CSA Board has asked that updates on crowding at YDF be presented every 6 months. Sacramento was last on the CSA Board agenda on March 10, 2011 and is scheduled to appear again at the September 8, 2011 meeting. Based on our visit of August 8, 2011 and data received, we will report to the CSA Board that Sacramento County's YDF remains suitable for the confinement of minors. Please continue to file population reports. In the event that the population levels of YDF exceed the totals established in the April 27, 2007 Suitability Plan, CSA will initiate the process for determining if the facility is suitable for the confinement of minors as described in W&I §209(e).

CSA staff continue to be available to you for technical assistance if requested.

Sincerely,

Toni Gardner, Field Representative
Facilities Standards and Operations Division
(916) 322-1638 toni.gardner@cdcr.ca.gov

Enclosure

Copy: Chris Johnson, Probation Division Chief
Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, Sacramento County
Chair, Sacramento County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission,
Chair, Board of Supervisors, Sacramento County
County Administrator, Sacramento County
County Counsel, Sacramento County